

Notes from Meeting with Illinois 8/19/2021

Non-EPA Attendees: Brad Beaver, Suzanne Moss, Kristi Jones, Michael Woods, Scott Ireland, John Teefey

OPP Attendees: Dan Rosenblatt, Lindsay Roe, Meg Hathaway

EPA Region 5 Invitees: Susan Rittenhouse, Tony Martig, Tammy Moore, Ed Nam, Sharmin Sayed

State-level Use Restrictions:

This year, Illinois Department of Agriculture instituted a rulemaking process to add a June 20th cutoff date and 85 degree cutoff, plus checking sensitive crop registry requirement. Sent out postcard reminders to all applicators to emphasize those restrictions.

Their cutoffs are only applied to OTT applications of dicamba and not to other forms of the chemical. but are looking into maybe expanding that if needed.

Illinois is interested in developing its requirements for the 2022 growing season. The approach used this year was temporary and cannot be duplicated. FIFRA 24a rulemaking would need to be used, IL could not do emergency rule like last year.

24a process in IL will take some time to generate and work = 45 day public comment period, then another comment period with a committee. Would probably take about 120 days

Complaints:

This year, have 175 misuse complaints for dicamba out of 332 total complaints. (Note that sometimes a dicamba complaint is not found to be dicamba after the inspection.) Pre-dicamba IL used to have about 150 complaints per year, now double that.

Last year, IL had 145 dicamba misuse complaints. Had 743 total complaints in 2019; they feel that their additional state-level restrictions helped lower this number in subsequent years.

Lots of the complaints are in Southern Illinois, also a pocket in mid-state area. No county-wide damage like previously occurred, but in south IL, there is almost county-wide

More complaints this year focus on corn applications than before.

Some but not too many complaints on specialty crops. More calls based on yards and trees this year than previously. Most of complaints are conventional soybean complaints.

They had a lot of rain after symptoms started, so symptoms are recovering faster, which may be contributing to the relatively low number of complaints.

Seeing quite a bit of volatilization. Hard to track the damage and waiting on final reports on damage tracking.

Do know that sometimes no complaints are being filed when there is damage because of apathy- because the person in a position to report doesn't think anything is going to happen

About 1 out of 5 of complaints are repeats from complainants from previous years.

Changes:

Some retailers are switching to Enlist and Liberty because they don't want to deal with complaints

Regarding weed management, dicamba fields are clean, but they are starting to get resistance reports (not much, though)

There seems to be a growing concern for pesticides by the public.

Other:

What percentage of fields are in DT, Enlist, Liberty? Not sure at this time but could report back on that.

No complaints at all on Enlist products. Even on side-by-side fields with one treated one not resistant, that's looking okay.

How many field staff do they have on this? Field inspectors- 15 based out of their home territories, some are buried, some have lower work load. They do field inspections as well as licensing, testing, and tolerance inspections. They're really very busy.

What does an inspection look like?

- Office does a first call on legitimacy of the claim
- Meet the complainant on site, take pictures, gather info about surrounding applications (usually limit to adjacent fields only based on time and resources), pull application records to make sure applicators are following the labels. A violation may be recordkeeping or misuse, etc.
- Staff in office evaluate what was gathered.
- May be a warning letter or a fine, may file for a hearing process

If it's volatility then it isn't a violation according to the state. If the product was applied according to the label, it's documented but no action is taken.

Training requirement from label? companies all do that training. Training compliance has been pretty good generally.

Are more problems associated with private or commercial applications? Small amount more issues from private applicators than commercial. However, it was stated that if they're making applications [of dicamba], issues are likely despite the applicator.

Have they had any issues of research fields being damaged? Yes. They have heard of seed plots being damaged.

What are extensionists advising? Try to do a lot on the front end through education and training in the licensing program. Break down impacts they're seeing by different areas to try to get a better picture of where issues are coming from.

Social impacts?

- Are hearing from people that want to be heard that there are several years in a row of damage in the same place. People are getting really frustrated.
- Some growers are having to switch to dicamba against their desires because their neighbors are using that technology and they don't want to repeatedly lose crops.
- "Can't eat anymore based on my financial losses" type of complaints have been received